

## Proposition No. 4

### INCLUDE IN THE CHARTER THE POWERS OF INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM

Shall the Charter, if approved by the voters in Proposition No. 1, grant to the electors of the county the powers of referendum and initiative?

INCLUDE IN THE CHARTER THE POWERS OF INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM - **YES** . . . ☐

INCLUDE IN THE CHARTER THE POWERS OF INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM - **NO** . . . ☐

#### Statement for:

Voting for the Charter, and for initiative and referendum, will give voters the right to directly vote on key issues regarding Clark County, instead of hoping our elected officials do the right thing. This is democracy at its finest.

Statewide, initiative and referendum (or the threat of an initiative/referendum), have lead to the passage of the State's Public Disclosure Act, campaign disclosure laws, key environmental laws, and transportation financing laws. Locally, the threat of initiative and referendum appears to help defeat a proposal for a Union Carbide toxic gas plant in Washougal in the 1980's, and a recent proposal for cardrooms in Washougal.

On the whole, initiative and referendum has done good things on a local and statewide level.

Some people worry about initiative and referendum causing revolutionary change in Clark County, but it is unlikely that could happen. For better or worse, state law narrowly limits the right of local initiative and referendum. For example, it would be illegal to repeal the County's Growth Management laws by referendum. Therefore, adequate legal safeguards exist to avoid initiative and referendum making changes that are too big. *Ultimately though, you just have to ask yourself: do we trust the voters to make the right choice?*

Please support the County Charter with initiative and referendum, giving the County voters the right to choose, and the right to directly vote on important local issues.

Committee in Favor of Initiative and Referendum, 2612 E. 20th Street, Vancouver, WA 98661; Telephone: (360) 690-4500.

Written by:  
John S. Karpinski, Chair

#### Rebuttal of statement against:

The No Committee's concerns that Initiative and Referendum (I/R) rights could cause big problems ignores legal limits on local I/Rs. I/R cannot revoke major local laws. However, I/R can get a local vote on local issues, like Washougal's cardroom proposal. I/R has been in Vancouver for decades, but used only three times, twice regarding the proposed Convention Center.

Giving voters more rights makes our political system better. Please vote *yes* on Initiative and Referendum.

Written by:  
Committee in Favor of Initiative  
and Referendum  
John S. Karpinski, Chair

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**Proposition Nos. 2, 3, and 4 will be effective only if the Home Rule Charter (Proposition No. 1) is approved by the Voters.**

**Proposition No. 4 explanatory statement :**

Proposition No. 4 allows the voters to determine if the Home Rule Charter should contain provisions allowing for direct government through the initiative and referendum processes. By voting yes on Proposition No. 4, the power of initiative and referendum will be included in the Charter. Voting no on Proposition No. 4 will remove initiative and referendum from the Charter.

The power of initiative generally refers to the authority of the voters of the county to directly initiate and enact legislation. The initiative process involves a petition containing a specified number of signatures which must either be adopted by the county commissioners or submitted to a vote of the people for adoption or rejection at an election.

Referendum is the right of the people to have an ordinance, which has been enacted by the county commissioners, submitted to the voters for their approval or rejection. This process includes the filing of a petition with a required minimum number of signatures prior to the effective date of the ordinance. If the required number of signatures are obtained on the petition, then the ordinance is suspended from becoming effective until it has either been repealed by the county commissioners or submitted to the voters for approval or rejection at an election.

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**Statement against:**

Americans have demanded campaign finance reform in recent years because of concern over how special interest money corrupts presidential politics. Initiative and Referendum sounds like a good idea, but what it really does is open the door for the same corrupting influences to destabilize our county government. The results can be disastrous, leading to inefficiency, loss of service, increased taxes, and potentially, even bankruptcy.

I&R has become a big business where paid signature gatherers, advertisers, campaign consultants and lawyers are paid millions of dollars to pass initiatives which frequently benefit huge corporations more than the average citizen. How can grassroots citizens and volunteer signature gatherers compete?

Initiative and Referendum are being promoted as a way to give citizens more choice in their government, but it gives false expectations. It cannot change any federal or state laws, budgets, or employment practices. However as written in the charter, a small group of only 100 people can use referendum to suspend and delay laws, creating uncertainty and delays in government operation. It also makes it difficult or impossible to revoke bad laws that have unintended consequences.

Vote *no* on Initiative and Referendum. I&R is complex.

For more information, contact: NoHomeRule Committee; Email: [nohomerule@attbi.com](mailto:nohomerule@attbi.com); Web Site: <http://nohomerule.home.attbi.com>.

Written by:  
Carrie Parks

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**Rebuttal of statement for:**

The courts have eliminated safeguards to keep the Initiative and Referendum process clean. Backers can spend as much as they want and use misleading tactics. This makes it good for big money special interests, but not for the citizens. It's inflexible, not allowing bad laws to be corrected or revoked. It actually *takes away* our choice as citizens if Democracy is put up to the highest bidder and used for self-serving purposes.

Please vote *no*.

Written by:  
Carrie Parks & Tom Armstrong,  
co-chairs